

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-12 are currently pending in this application. By the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Claim 8 was previously canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been introduced into the application by these amendments.

Telephonic Interviews

The Examiner is thanked for granting telephonic interviews with the Applicant's representative on March 13, 2008 and April 3, 2008. During the interviews the current amendment to claim 1 was discussed.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Action, claims 1, 6 and 9 - 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,482,732 to Kramer in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,784,812 to Saito. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

As amended, claim 1 is directed to a method for producing a ceramic part formed as a denture, artificial tooth or bridge. The method includes powder injection molding at least one ceramic powder and one binder into an inner cavity of a molding tool under the effective heat and/or pressure and then solidifying

this into a green body preform to form, in a first cavity, a first component. After injection molding this green body preform, the method further includes injection molding at least one other ceramic molding material, in a second cavity, as a second component on the previously produced green body preform under the effective heat and/or pressure in at least one other injection molding process to form a multi-component green body preform. The molding materials of at least two of the powder injection molding processes differ from each other. The multi-component green body preform thus formed is subjected to binder stripping and sintering to form the final ceramic part. The ceramic powder of the at least one powder injection molding process is formed such that the ceramic component of the final ceramic part formed from one of the first and second components is transparent or translucent, and the ceramic powder of an other of the powder injection molding processes is formed such that a ceramic component of the final ceramic part produced from the other of the first or second components is less transparent than the part of the final ceramic part produced from the one of the first or second components that is transparent or translucent.

Kramer, in contrast, shows a kit and a system for preparing porcelain denture restorations. The kit of Kramer includes first second and third powders provided in labeled containers. The powders vary in opacity and are layered to cover a metal dental restoration. Saito shows a ceramics binder which can be

removed from molded articles in a short period of time when it is mixed with ceramics raw material powder and the resulting mixture is molded and heated for elimination of organic compounds. The molding shown in Saito takes place in a single mold where the ceramic raw material powder is injected and then sintered.

As discussed in the interviews, and agreed upon by the Examiner, the invention as currently claimed in claim 1 is not shown by the above combination. Namely, the claimed invention relates to injection molding at least one ceramic powder and one binder into an inner cavity of a molding tool under the effective heat and/or pressure and then solidifying this into a green body preform to form, in a first cavity, a first component. After injection molding this green body preform, the method further includes injection molding at least one other ceramic molding material, in a second cavity, as a second component on the previously produced green body preform under the effective heat and/or pressure in at least one other injection molding process to form a multi-component green body preform. Saito shows a single molding step without forming first and second components in different molds. Further, as admitted to in the Action, Kramer does not show a powder injection molding process. In fact Kramer does not involve any molding process. The porcelain powders of Kramer are used in a process to cover a metal coping (column 2, line3). In such a process, a master die of a tooth is duplicated to create a refractory die. The surface of the refractory die (coping) is then covered

with a porcelain material using a brush or other applicator and then baked in an oven.

In view of the amendment to claim 1 and the Examiner's indication that the amendment would overcome the rejection in view of Kramer and Saito, the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 6 and 9 – 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 5 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kramer in view of Saito further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,705,025 to Daniels. Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kramer in view of Saito further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,916,498 to Hofmann et al. Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kramer in view of Saito further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,591,030 to Theil.

Further to the above remarks, claims 2 - 5 and 7 depend from claim 1, which is now believed to be allowable and should likewise be allowable. Accordingly, the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2 – 5 and 7 is respectfully requested.

Applicant: Ulrich Wennemann
Application No.: 10/501,593

Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview will help to advance the prosecution of this application or that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing Amendments and Remarks, applicant respectfully submits that the present application, including claims 1-7 and 9-12, is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Ulrich Wennemann

By /Robert J. Ballarini/
Robert J. Ballarini
Registration No. 48,684
(215) 568-6400

Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
United Plaza, Suite 1600
30 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
RJB/srs